

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*Twin Cities Campus*

*Family Practice and Community Health  
Program in Medical Student Education*

*A682 Mayo Memorial Building  
420 Delaware Street S.E.  
MMC# 381  
Minneapolis, MN 55455  
Office: 612-624-0452  
Fax: 612-625-0916  
<http://www.med.umn.edu/fp>*

May 19, 2003

Dockets Management Branch  
Food & Drug Administration  
Department of Health & Human Services  
Room 10-61  
5630 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

To Whom It May Concern:

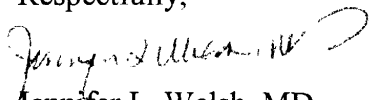
I am writing this letter to ask that the FDA approve the application to sell Emergency Contraception (EC) over the counter. Emergency contraception is extremely safe and effective. Because EC must be taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse, it is important that women have immediate access to the pills. Requiring a doctor's prescription puts an unnecessary barrier to access, especially for low income women who cannot afford to seek care with a physician to obtain EC. In addition, during the time that EC is most needed (ie, weekends and holidays), many women cannot access their physicians. Lastly, in my work as a family physician, I have seen women denied access to EC by clinics, hospitals and pharmacists, even though I work in a large, progressive metropolitan area.

Better access to EC has the potential to improve women's overall health by decreasing the number of unplanned pregnancies. Both continuing a pregnancy and terminating a pregnancy have potential adverse health outcomes that do not exist with EC.

I hope that the Food and Drug Administration will support the availability of Emergency Contraception over the counter.

Thank you.

Respectfully,



Jennifer L. Welsh, MD  
Assistant Professor  
Family Practice and Community Health

01 P-0075

C288